

iii.

the bearded Children's Librarian  
obviously a summer replacement  
here at his desk is practicing  
his wild-eyed stories gesticulating  
feverishly towards an empty wicker chair  
which is due soon to hold an attentive  
if unfortunate little person.

perhaps a bit out of focus  
this is how we remember him  
nonetheless.

iv.

waving from the motor-home's wide window  
they are happily surprised  
here in the Colorado campsite  
at last night's wondrous summer snowstorm.

footsteps lead away betraying  
the hidden photographer who stands  
in the glassy morning light  
while snow feathers bristlecone limbs:

and every bit of this predating  
that magic land of divorce  
and the subsequent binge that later read  
in the local paper like the night  
Tamburlaine lost his cherry.

v.

this is a photograph of God.  
no kidding he's the one with  
"Roscoe" written across his shirt.

aside from the fact that He  
is in this shot and those few birds  
and that one lousy tree you can see  
that this picture is no big deal.

I have no idea who those clowns  
are in the back there.

#### COMPROMISE

just above  
the onion sprouts  
Brisco sits  
on the 4x4 post  
a proper totem  
to all things  
brooding  
and cat-like

my garden's  
guardian he is  
surprised some  
what to see  
his private  
shit-box  
transformed into  
a vegetable bin  
the soft earth  
lined with edible  
inhabitants

but there is  
nothing to be  
done about this  
it's either me  
or him these  
days for I  
know he knows  
what a marvelous  
stew he'd make  
times being  
what they are

-- Paul H. Cook

Tempe AZ

#### OVERSPILL

I was wrestling with my brother  
like we used to do  
when we were kids.

And, like then,  
things got rougher and rougher --  
his arm jerked too tight  
around my neck,  
but I got him in a jackknife  
completed to a fall  
like I did  
when we were kids  
since he was younger.

But this time  
my pills popped out  
of my pocket  
and spilled,  
all the capsules cracking.  
shooting their colored beads --  
red and orange and blue --  
all over the varnished floor.